
MEMO

To: Blue Ridge Board of Education
Dr. Hillary Stanifer, Superintendent

From: Burton Huddleston, Principal, Blue Ridge Intermediate and Junior High School

Date: 12/15/2023

RE: Principal Report

UPCOMING EVENTS

December

- 14 Boys basketball vs. Ridgeview @ 5:30pm
- 18 Boys basketball at Tri-Valley @ 5:30pm
- 20 End of 2nd Quarter
- 20 Christmas Sing-a-long @ 1:00 pm

January

- 4 Boys Basketball vs. Heyworth JH @ 5:30
- 5 Boys Basketball at Cornerstone Christian Academy @ 6:00
- 8 Girls Volleyball vs. Holy Cross @ 5:30
- 10 Girls Volleyball vs. St. Malachy @ 5:30
- 11 Girls Volleyball vs. Bement/Cerro Gordo @ 5:30
- 11 Boys Basketball 7th Grade Showcase at Heyworth @ TBA
- 15 Girls Volleyball at Argenta-Oreana @ 5:30
- 16 Boys Basketball 8th Grade Showcase at Corpus Christi Catholic School @ TBA
- 17 Girls Volleyball at Clinton JH @ 5:30
- 20 Boys Basketball 7th Grade Regional
- 27 Boys Basketball 8th Grade Regional

SCHOOL NEWS

Behavior

There were 86 referrals written for the month of November. Three of those referrals resulted in in-school suspensions. We are seeing a decrease in referrals across in most areas. We continue to work with families and drivers to reduce behaviors on the bus.

Sing Along

On Wednesday, December 20th from 1:00 to 2:00, Blue Ridge Intermediate and Junior High will be welcoming families to participate in a whole school Sing Along to end our calendar year. The students have been practicing with our music teacher, Emily Weiler, since coming back from

Thanksgiving Break. Molly Schneman, our art teacher, is preparing a group of junior students and staff to perform a whimsical revision of the 12 Days of Christmas as part of the event. It was well attended last year and I am excited to have families help us celebrate the Holiday season through song and community.

IAR Update

Since the last board meeting, we have had another update on the status of BRIJHS from ISBE. Due to the great work by students and staff, we have not only moved from Targeted to Commendable designation, we have also qualified for early exit from the school improvement process. This is another celebration for our campus as we work towards Exemplary status for our school. Unfortunately, the grant money tied to the school improvement status is removed moving forward also.

Career Fair

Shawna Kollross, Raquel Eshleman, and Melissa Whisman took all our 8th grade students to the I-Hotel for a career conference on Wednesday, December 13th. The students participated in six different breakout sessions that explored a variety of career opportunities. The 8th grade will continue work in the ELA classroom with Mrs. Eshleman by accessing the Xello software recently adopted at the junior high and high school.

Raising Student Achievement Conference

Burt Huddleston, Kari White, Andrea Weedman, and Leisha Beckman attended the Raising Student Achievement Conference in Oak Brook, IL on December 11th and 12th. Each day began with a dynamic keynote speaker and then followed with back-to-back breakout sessions. The breakout sessions were led by educators and administrators from around the state and covered topics from school culture, artificial intelligence, effective instructional strategies, ways to engage students, amongst many other topics. The team that attended the conference will share highlights and actionable points at an upcoming staff meeting.

Winter Play

The Theater Club at Blue Ridge Intermediate and Junior High School will be performing on Friday, December 15th and Saturday, December 16th at 7:00. The admission is free. The students will showcase their talents in two, short, comical skits around the theme of Christmas. One is called *The Santa Interviews* and the other, *A Christmas Carol*. Karisa Yeagle and Heather Wilcoxon have been working diligently preparing the students and stage for this performance. All students in the club will either be performing or helping with backstage production. The activity continues to be a great way to highlight the talents of our students.

September Exemplary Knights

Staff Recognition: **Emily Weiler**

Emily Weiler continues to be a great support for our students at BRIJHS. Mrs. Weiler has revised her schedule at Schneider Elementary to be able to serve our 4th, 5th, and 6th grades students with music instruction one day a week. Additionally, she has planned and practiced for

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the upcoming Sing Along on December 20th. Ms. Weiler is truly a blessing for our students as she has stepped up to fill a need in our building. Even though she is only able to work with our students one day a week, she works hard to build strong relationships with our students through music and movement.

4th Grade: Brylee Maddox

Brylee is an amazing kid! She is kind to all of her classmates, even going out of her way to include others. Brylee works extremely hard, and tries her best on all her work. She produces high quality work every time. Brylee has a positive attitude and approaches everything with a good attitude. She always gets her homework done and is responsible. Brylee makes our classroom a better place and we are lucky to have her!

5th Grade: Braelyn Woliung

Braelyn puts forth 100% effort in all of her school work. She likes to lead her classmates by reminding them of classroom expectations and often steps up when others do not. She has a fantastic attitude and shows respect to her peers and teachers (unless she is competing in PE and then all bets are off). Keep up the effort, Braelyn. It is much appreciated!

6th Grade: Madeline Marshall

Maddy comes to school every day ready to work. She is focused, on task, cheerful, and hard-working. She never complains and is always ready to participate and volunteer to answer questions. She is an asset to every class discussion and is a joy to have in class.

7th grade: Gavin Ozee

Despite rarely ever putting his name on a paper, Gavin takes his education seriously. Gavin participates in class, and gives deep consideration to discussions. Gavin is kind and shows respect for his peers. We suspect that Gavin is precisely the sort of Older Brother that everyone wishes they could have. Gavin shows respect for the learning environment, including staff at all levels.

8th grade: Chase Ellis

Chase is an excellent example of a "student athlete". Chase maintains a rigorous training regimen for athletics outside of school while also being responsible for his classwork and maintaining high grades. We feel like Chase has really stepped up his game this year and shown dedication to his education.

Chase has also grown as a leader this year. Chase's peers listen when he speaks and respect him for his quiet confidence.